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US Shifting Policy on International R&D Ties

Important shifts in US policy concerning international scientific and technological commitments can be expected over the next few months.

The new Administration has inherited a framework, essentially established under President Ford and Henry Kissinger and continued under President Carter, within which scientific and technical agreements with other nations have been actively promoted because of their usefulness in achieving broad foreign policy objectives. Most of the specific projects initiated within this framework, however, have been made the responsibility of what the State Department refers to as the "technical agencies," such as the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy. With this arrangement now breaking down under budgetary pressures, the task of devising both a new philosophy and the appropriate set of institutional mechanisms for putting it into effect has become an urgent priority for the new Administration.

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Kissinger's approach has been successfully applied in contexts such as the opening up of diplomatic and economic relations with the People's Republic of China. It worked reasonably enough when there was sufficient money to go round, when few searching questions were asked about the scientific substance encompassed by, for example, the many bilateral agreements signed with other countries, and when competing domestic pressures were not too strong.

In the February-March round of budget cuts demanded by the Office of Management and Budget, however, international projects were often low on the priority list when evaluated in purely scientific or technical terms. The result has been a series of actions, including NASA's withdrawal from a joint mission with the European Space Agency (ESA) to send a pair of spacecraft in complementary orbits around the sun, which have brought a stream of protests to the State Department.

The word is now going out from Washington-based science attaches to their home ministries that the US can no longer be trusted to keep what had previously been considered as virtually binding commitments towards international projects (Within ESA, for example, once the member states have agreed to a project, each is legally committed to providing continued funding unless costs escalate above a predetermined level.) James Buckley, the Under Secretary of State for Security Affairs, Science and Technology, admitted at a briefing of Department science advisers last week that the threat of losing credibility as a "reliable partner" was causing the Department considerable concern, particularly when expressed by West European allies such as France and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Buckley has already written to several agencies, asking them to consider reallocating the cuts made in their international programs in order to meet existing commitments. He is also chairing an interagency meeting that is to review the status of US international science and technology activities, the effects of the budget reductions, and US foreign policy and technical program interests in these activities.

Similar concerns have also been expressed by Secretary of State Alexander Haig to David Stockman,

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In Brief

George A. Keyworth, Mr. Reagan's newly appointed science adviser, arrived in Washington last week from the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and signed on as a White House consultant, pending a Senate confirmation hearing, still to be scheduled at this writing.

Keyworth has already touched base with a number of research agency chiefs, including NSF Director John Slaughter. The long-awaited appointment drew a warm statement of greeting from the National Science Board, which praised Keyworth for a "fine record in both research and administration" at Los Alamos, where he was chief of the physics division.

Congress's science committees, which regard the White House science adviser as their own handle on science policy, were getting restless about the long-delayed appointment. Early in May, just days before Keyworth's selection became informally known in Washington, two subcommittee chairmen on the House Science and Technology Committee, Doug Walgren (D-Pa.) and Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), wrote to Reagan, urging that he get a science adviser.

"We believe some of the decisions in your FY 82 budget clearly reflect the lack of sound advice which can only come from a science adviser on a high policy level," they stated.

Sharp Turns on Law of Sea, Nuclear Spread

The Reagan Administration has already indicated that it's going to be veering away from the course of its predecessors in two major areas of international technology policy—the proposed Law of the Sea and nuclear proliferation.

With regard to the Law of the Sea, for example, the decision to carry out a complete review of the US negotiating position was not merely the result of a greater responsiveness to the complaints from mining companies about some of the clauses agreed to last summer, but one of the first manifestations of the injection of a set of conservative themes in the foreign policy of the new Administration. Three of the most significant are, firstly, the new emphasis being given to the concept of "national security" as a primary foreign policy objective; secondly, a deep-rooted distrust of any negotiations carried out under the umbrella of the United Nations and its member agencies, particularly in the name of the "new international economic order;" and, thirdly, the argument that any attempt to regulate technological innovation—either domestically or internationally—is an impediment to economic efficiency that should be reduced to a minimum.

The same themes have emerged, although in a slightly different guise, in the new Administration's attitude towards nuclear proliferation policy. Here what is being repudiated is the philosophy, endorsed by both the Ford and the Carter administrations, that US technological superiority as a supplier of nuclear technology and materials could be used as a lever to influence the nuclear plans and policies of other countries. In contrast, State Department officials in the new Administration indicate that they are working towards a non-proliferation policy that would place "national security" interests high on the agenda (for example in discussions with India and Pakistan, two thorns in the side of the Carter administration); would distinguish between advanced and developing countries, with more stringent policies aimed at the latter than the former, assumed already to be acting more responsibly; and would consciously minimize interference with the export efforts of US nuclear companies.

Such policies are likely to be generally acceptable to the private sector. Equally significant, they will please the newly powerful conservative foreign policy establishment, which holds each of the three themes described above close to its heart, Indeed, conservatives may well find it easier to articulate these themes in the less obviously political area of international science and technology policy than in more mainstream areas, such as international economic policy.

However, there is also likely to be strong opposition from those who promoted the previous policies. The most significant manifestation of this so far has been the decision last month by five members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to vote against the appointment of James T. Malone as Assistant Secretary of State responsible for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. Malone was previously general counsel for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency under Presidents Nixon and Ford. During the Carter regime, he worked as a Washington attorney on international and energy matters with Doub and Muntzing, whose clients included the nuclear industries of Taiwan and Japan in their negotiations with the US government over nuclear exports.

During his nomination hearings, Malone was closely questioned by, among others, Senator John Glenn (D-Ohio) and Senator Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), two firm supporters of tough export controls aimed at reducing the risks of nuclear-proliferation. Both asked about possible conflicts of interest in his new job, given that Malone will be *de facto* chief nuclear adviser to the State Department. Staff aides said later that Glenn's refusal to approve Malone's appointment was meant both as a protest against reports that the Administration was planning to reduce the strictness of nuclear-export controls, and as a warning shot to the Administration that it can expect tough opposition if it tries to put some of its proposals into practice.

Malone—as shown in his nomination hearings—can be expected to fight back. As one of the co-authors of the Heritage Foundation's report *Mandate for Leadership: Policy Management in a Conservative Administration,* and a State Department official whose nomination was warmly supported by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC), Malone enters the Administration with strong ideological convictions that will inevitably make an imprint on the way that science and technology become instruments of Republican foreign policy. In this, he seems likely to be supported both by his superior, Under Secretary James Buckley, and his Deputy for Scientific and Technological Affairs, Charles Horner, previously a staff aide to Senator Daniel Moynihan (D-NY), and a member of the Georgetown Center for Strategic Studies.

. . .Haig Fears Cuts Hurt Foreign Relations

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Director of the Office of Management and Budget. In a letter dated April 15, Haig said that the budget cuts threatened activities made under international commitments "where other governments have invested time, effort and funds based on this government's agreement that it would meet its specified contribution." He complained that the budget cuts had been imposed, either directly by OMB or by decision within the technical agencies, in a manner which constituted a "unilateral abrogation" of these commitments. And Haig added: "While budgetary reductions are a clear goal of this Administration, one of its principal foreign policy objectives is to render the US a reliable international partner."

At present, it remains unclear whether Haig's letter reflected a well thought-out policy position, or whether—as seems equally likely—it was intended primarily to soothe some of the feathers which had been ruffled, not so much by the contents of the budget cuts, as the hurried manner in which they were carried out. After all, foreign governments realize that the US Executive Branch can only make financial commitments subject to the yearly approvement by Congress. Their anger was largely inflamed by the lack of advance consultation or information on where the budget ax was going to fall.

Similarly some of the US agencies, in allocating their cuts to international programs, may have been angling for subsequent support from the State Department or Congress. Haig, for example, is said to have been instrumental in replacing cuts proposed by OMB in the foreign aid budget and in saving NASA's Galileo Project to send two spacecraft to Jupiter in 1985, towards which the German government has already made a considerable commitment.

Nevertheless, the international outcry provoked by the cuts remaining in the budget proposals which Mr. Reagan sent to Congress in March has forced the State Department to place the whole area on its agenda earlier than it might otherwise have chosen. As one top department official put it last week, "We are very concerned with the situation, particularly those aspects which relate to drawing back from programs to which we have absolute commitments." In the short term, the Department's main task is to patch up the hard feelings that the budget cuts have provoked. NASA's withdrawal from the solar mission, for example, resulted in an angry visit to Foggy Bottom by three European ambassadors to register ESA's protest, and both NASA officials and several Congressional committees are busy trying to have some of the money replaced. In the longer term, however, the new Administration will have to decide how far it is prepared to accept the Kissinger theme that science and technology can be useful tools of foreign policy. Having done so, it will then be required to work out what variations it intends to develop around this theme, and what type of commitment it is prepared to make.

High on the priority list for such a re-evaluation is the US subscription to the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), in Austria. NSF, asked by OMB to allocate budget cuts within its various directorates, and facing a 25 per cent reduction in funds for international programs from the 1980 level, decided to cut out its $3-million-a-year contribution to the Institute, a small research center that conducts studies of global issues such as energy demand and climate change. Having since realized that, under the terms of the international treaty setting up the Institute, any country wishing to withdraw must give at least a year's notice, the NSF is now scraping around to see if it can find funds for the 1982 subscription. But if no further funds are guaranteed by the Administration after this date, IIASA says it would be forced to close in 1983. This would particularly annoy the Austrian government, which has spent a large amount of money in restoring the palace in which IIASA is currently situated.

The problem is that, although the US subscription to IIASA comes from the NSF budget, the Institute was never set up for strictly scientific reasons. As National Academy of Sciences President Philip Handler

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. . .Who Should Pay for "Political Science"?

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told the members of the National Science Board last month, "IIASA was founded for political purposes"—primarily as a channel of relatively unpoliticized communication between East and West. The Institute has carried out several major studies, most recently of future energy consumption patterns, which have been of some technical value, particularly in gathering data for Eastern Europe and the USSR. Nevertheless, according to Handler, politics still makes up two-thirds of the Institute's purpose, "so examination cannot stop at the quality of the science."

From the point of view of the NSF, which played little role in the negotiations setting up IIASA, but is now required—by international convention—to pick up the tab, this has become a major stumbling block. There is nothing in the NSF's charter which says that US funding decisions should be used as an instrument of US foreign policy. If anything, NSF officials argue, the main technical achievements of IIASA are of greater relevance to more "applied" agencies, such as the Department of Energy or the Defense Department. And these should therefore be required to find money to support the Institute from their own research budgets—a suggestion which is said to be receiving close attention within the State Department.

Even if it is the most pressing, the decision about future policy towards IIASA is not unique. The NSF is currently responsible for the details of 27 bilateral agreements made between the US and other nations in recent years. Often these have been drawn up on the spur of the moment; as one State Department official appointed by the Reagan Administration cynically put it, "Scientific and technological cooperation is often something to do when we cannot think of anything else."

Yet even if the US has little to gain scientifically from such agreements, there are often other, more useful results. For example, one of the components of Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation made with Spain in 1976, under which the US is allowed to place military bases on that country's soil, was a US-Spanish science and technology program, promised for five years with a total budget of $26.4 million.

Other examples where the State Department considers budget cuts could have adverse foreign policy consequences were cited in Haig's letter to Budget Director Stockman. For example, Haig said that the US had received through its embassies in Greece, Tunisia and Venezuela, "expressions of serious concern" regarding possible cancelations of the US Department of Energy's Country Energy Assessments recently promised by embassies on instruction from DoE. He also referred to concerns expressed by the Director-General of the International Energy Agency in Paris and the US's partners in the Grimethorpe Fluidized Bed Coal Combustion project in Britain, nearing completion at a total cost of $75 million, about the possibility of the DoE dropping out.

State Department officials admit that they are currently looking for ways of putting its commitments to international programs on what one describes as "a more sensible, stable and predictable" footing. At a pragmatic level, this could involve various institutional innovations. One might be for the Department to work with OMB in preparing an annual cross-cut of agency research budgets, to provide a government-wide picture of the amount allocated to international scientific activities. This would be comparable to the type of effort already applied, with the assistance of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), to assessing government-wide support for basic research.

The argument here is that, just as OSTP has been able to use such an analysis to pinpoint possible weak areas in federal support for basic research, so the State Department would be able to provide a similar commentary on international efforts which it feels to be important for foreign policy reasons, at a sufficiently early stage in the budget preparation to influence its eventual outcome with minimal disruption.

Another innovation being discussed is whether the Department should receive a special allocation of funds to support projects which it feels have an important foreign policy function. This would be particularly useful where such projects are competing on strictly technical grounds—and with relatively little support from the domestic scientific community—against other research demands. State Department officials say that they are increasingly inclined towards such a solution, which could, for example, be a way of avoiding the type of dilemma which the NSF is now facing over the IIASA contribution.—DD

Chemist Wins NSF Prize

W. Clark Still, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Columbia University, is the sixth recipient of the National Science Foundation's annual, gold-laden Alan T. Waterman Award, named after the late founding director of the Foundation. The award, honoring an outstanding young scientist, is accompanied by a medal and "up to $50,000 a year for three years of research and advanced studies."

France: Election Elates Science Community

Paris. Many are the researchers who took a celebratory swig of champagne after the election of Socialist Francois Mitterand as President of the French Republic. The reason, quite simply, is that scientists here tend toward the political left, but for the past 23 years, it's been the center-right that's dominated presidential politics.

For the scientific community, the election campaign was extremely calm, in contrast to the presidential campaign of 1974 and the parliamentary elections of 1978, on both of which occasions the laboratories ceased work in favor of political activity.

No resounding text or petition was released by any of the political-action groups of the major research organizations. The Socialist party published a short manifesto, "For Research," but it didn't generate much interest since it came out when the reelection of Valery Giscard d'Estaing, rather than subsidiary policy issues, was the basis of the voting contest.

The manifesto was prepared by a group of scientists headed by Francois Gros, the Director of the Pasteur Institute, a leading center for basic research in biology. Since Gros served as Mitterand's adviser for scientific affairs, the manifesto is considered to have some authority. Moreover, at the end of April, candidate Mitterand announced that he would establish, if elected, a High Council of Science, connected to the President himself, in contrast to the current consulting Committee for Science and Technology, which reports to the Prime Minister. Thus, there is little doubt that Francois Gros will be called upon to play a major role in national science-policy affairs.

For the Socialist Party—which now means the President's party—"French research is not doing well," says the manifesto. Despite the 1981 budgetary increase, it points out, the reduction of 20 per cent in constant francs from 1968 to 1981 in government funds has had serious consequences: aging equipment, lack of equipment, and basic research sacrificed for the profits of applied research. Furthermore, says the manifesto, "French research is of insufficient volume and uneven quality, sometimes brilliant, often mediocre, too isolated, maladjusted."

The majority of the signers of the Socialist blueprint are biologists, the newly rising class in a scientific community that has traditionally been dominated by physicists. So, it's not surprising to find these biologists asking, in regard to genetics research, "Who except the scientists themselves will be capable of appreciating the importance of the results of research, of evaluating the work done by others?" It is a necessity for the politicians and those responsible for administration to rely on the experts, they argue.

But another group of Socialists and supporters do not agree. About 50 of them, three days before the election, released an "address" to the candidates which was of a completely different tone: "We affirm that, before any important decision, regarding the development of a discovery or of a new technology. . .hearings should be scheduled before competent scientists *as well as* representatives of the social groups and those in charge of the activities that these innovations wish to affect."

Will the Office of Technology Assessment be reinvented in France?"

It is not by chance that one finds, among the signers of this "address," more ministerial officials and sociologists of innovation than scientists. They await a redistribution of the administrative power over the management of science; the researchers instead hope mainly for more resources.

On one point, nonetheless, the two groups agree: basic research, which was neglected by the former President, must regain its rightful place. Both groups

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Political Advice for Science

The following remarks were made by Rep. David R. Obey (D-Wisc.) to a group of Nobel laureates and other scientists who pleaded May 6 before a House Appropriations Subcommittee for increased support for biomedical research and training:

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". . .I think you have a political problem. . .Not all of us are fortunate enough to come from districts which have large medical teaching centers or learning centers. So, in many districts throughout the country, there is really no constituency for the message which you are bringing us today. . .But the problem you have, very frankly, is that there are not enough linkages between people like you and general medical practitioners throughout the country. And if I could offer you a gratuitous piece of advice, it would simply be that you find ways to reach out for support to a greater extent than you have in the past from the general medical profession. . .

If we could find a way to label [the NIH appropriations bill] the National Defense Scientific Research Act of 1981, we could put in all the money in the world and nobody would lift a finger to object to it. . .

Slim Returns at Opening Probe into NCI

The Senate last week initiated what looks like open season on the National Cancer Institute (NCI). But returns from the first day's outing were meager, and staff foreshadowings of what's to come do not suggest that the aspiring sleuths are on to any great scandals or shortcomings at the Bethesda headquarters of cancer research.

What's behind the sudden flareup of legislative interest is the confluence of two new-in-control senatorial Republicans eager to make their marks, the approaching 10th anniversary of the National Cancer Act, NCI's hovering around the symbolic billion-dollar-a-year mark, and the sad fact that cancer has yielded relatively little to what used to be called the "war on cancer."

The two senators on the cancer trail are Orrin Hatch, of Utah, Chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, and Paula Hawkins, freshman of Florida, who chairs that same Committee's newly created Subcommittee on Investigations and General Oversight. With a day of hearings on May 21, Mrs. Hawkins was the first one out, following months of staff inquiries that were touched off, she says, when she began to wonder why a cancer cure isn't "around the corner, a la polio?"

The division of territory between Chairman Hatch, whose hearings were postponed, on short notice, to next week, and Mrs. Hawkins appears to be on the basis of him looking for dirt in NCI's big contract programs while she pursues reasons for the failure to find a comprehensive cure for the disease.

The opening witness, Henry C. Pitot, Chairman of the National Cancer Advisory Board and Director of the McArdle Laboratory for Cancer Research, University of Wisconsin, took the theme that prevailed through the day: Keep pouring on the money, because great things are down the pike.

"Since new knowledge is largely based on knowledge at hand," he said, "the acquisition rate becomes exponential as our knowledge of cancer, its nature and control, expands. My observations as a scientist who is active in the field of cancer research show that we are on an ascending slope of exponential increase in our knowledge of cancer and that practical payoffs for people afflicted with this disease can be expected with greater and greater frequency."

The only serious suggestion of strategic problems afflicting the cancer program was introduced by Harold Amos, a member of the President's Cancer Panel and Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at Harvard Medical School.

After praising the President's panel—which was important under Nixon because his crony Benno C. Schmidt served on it—Amos warned that NCI should not be burdened with "technology transfer from laboratory to clinic and from center to community hospital. . ." Public assumptions that NCI attends to this task, he said, "must be challenged as a threat to divert the NCI from the one thing it was created to do and can do admirably, namely conduct and develop programs in research into the etiology, diagnosis, pre-

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FRANCE *(Continued from page 5)*

agree that discoveries and new technologies and the conditions under which they are produced, their diffusion and utilization cannot be separated as if one were simply dealing with an asset to be exploited. But the ways and means differ.

For Francois Gros' team, research within government organizations cannot be controlled by the overseeing ministries because "they are not very capable of doing it." Gros and his colleagues therefore join the opposition to the reforms progressively accomplished during the seven-year reign of Giscard. For the past three years in particular, the Secretary of State for Research, Pierre Aigrain, has been deprived of half of his budget, which has gone instead to the technology ministries, especially that of industry. Little by little, policy guidance offices for R&D have been installed in each of the government agencies, and by now they are a force to be reckoned with.

As a conclusion, the Socialist blueprint demands: "A vast reform to be coordinated and managed by a strong authority, a powerful ministry: it would be called the Ministry of Research and Scientific Information." To this well-orchestrated blueprint for centralism, the rival wing inevitably responded by proposing to "give the scientists *self-management* of their programs."

It is still too early to know if this division between the two theses regarding research correspond to the two traditional groups in the French left: centralist on one side; self-management, that is closer to the operational model used in Anglo-Saxon societies, on the other. It will be necessary to await the final composition of the government after the parliamentary elections at the end of June in order to know the part given to the affairs of science among the affairs of state.

While there is much talk of change, veteran observers of the French science consider it prudent to recall that the more things change, the more they stay the same.—FS

. . .Kennedy Uses Hearing to Protest Cuts

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vention and treatment of cancer. In that role," Amos warned, "its resources are already overtaxed. The establishment of its most significant advances as clinical practice throughout the land, admittedly of utmost importance, must be the task of some other network already in place."

The only whiff of scandal, highly touted to the press by Mrs. Hawkins' staff, was a warmed-over serving of an argument between NCI and the Food and Drug Administration concerning NCI's contention that FDA was tardy in reporting evidence of renal toxicity in two drugs under clinical investigation, BiCNU and Methyl CCNU. Letters of accusation and rebuttal between FDA's chief of drugs, J. Richard Crout, and NCI Director Vincent T. DeVita Jr. were introduced into the record.

Crout's letter accused, and DeVita's said, Yes, we were a bit slow, but the reason is that the signs of toxicity were slow to appear and false positives were suspected, and, besides, we've learned from the incident and are trying to avoid a repetition.

The incident calls for corrective action, and, presumably, such is in the works. But from the legislative perspective, it's worth noting that the very same facts, with perhaps a few less embellishments, were raked over in hearings two months ago by a House Subcommittee chaired by Albert Gore (D-Tenn.).

Mrs. Hawkins did bring out that some medical practitioners are concerned that improved treatment techniques developed in major cancer research and treatment centers are slow in getting into routine medical practice. Amos, of the Cancer Panel, insisted, however, that NCI shouldn't be stuck with the task.

She also questioned whether the National Cancer Advisory Board could effectively review thousands of grant applications and appraisals. Amos told her they work at it and subdivide the task, but the impression was left that it's once over lightly.

An active part in the hearing was taken by Senator Kennedy, one of the architects of the 1971 Cancer Act, and, until the Republicans took over the Senate, a strict, but paternalistic, overseer of NCI. Kennedy used the forum, as he uses every other one he can manage, to berate the Reagan Administration for its stinginess.

He got witnesses to agree with him that, while some government activities could be throttled back pending improvements in the economy, biomedical research was not among them. "We must have continuity," Kennedy declared.

In an exchange with DeVita, Kennedy asked, "Do you recommend a vigorous government-supported effort to stop smoking?"

DeVita said that he did, and Kennedy went on to ask whether the NCI Director would recommend such a program to Health and Human Services Secretary Richard S. Schweiker.

DeVita replied that he has recommended strong efforts against smoking, and that NCI, which, he said, is spending $14 million this year on smoking-related research, has achieved "quite a success in stopping smoking."

Mrs. Hawkins wound up the hearing by announcing that she's going to ask Secretaryt Schweiker "to appoint an appropriate study group, made up of representatives from the cancer centers and community hospitals. . .to address the problem of the transfer of cancer treatment technology."

The hearings will continue, a staff member said, perhaps in June, but he wasn't sure.—DSG

R&D: Industry to the Rescue?

Will industry provide a new pot of gold for academic science? The Reagan Administration is for it, and the prospect is brightened by a number of big industrial contracts with academe, including last month's $50 million deal between the German firm Hoechst and Massachusetts General Hospital. Cool-headed assessments of the possibly limited potential of this source of support have been in short supply, but fortunately such was provided in April by NIH Director Donald Fredrickson in a question-and-answer period following his address in April to the American Federation for Clinical Research, in San Francisco:

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Q: Do you see in the next decade any major source of support for biomedical research other than the US Government via the NIH mechanism emerging?

Fredrickson: Well, we've been recently meeting with people from Wall Street, from the great firms, trying to find out just how much money there really is out there. And there is money out there, of course, very specifically tied to relatively short-term ventures, except in some unusual new experiments. We're going to continue that. It's impossible to imagine, though, the boards of any corporations really advising the kind of long range investments that have underlaid most of what you have heard today; it simply isn't going to happen. And the Congress knows that, and the Administration knows it. . .

Education Research Receives Modest Cuts

Although it is hard to be joyful about an 18 per cent budget cut, the staff at the National Institute of Education (NIE) is quietly pleased that the agency suffered no more than that from the Reagan ax, as they look at the damage done to other federal agencies supporting social science research.

The Administration's 1982 budget cuts NIE to $61 million from the $74 million appropriated for 1981. But Mr. Reagan is not starting a new trend in the fortunes of NIE, as he is with several other agencies on his hit list. Congress has been trimming the Institute back for two or three years; its budget peaked at $83 million in 1979.

Recent events on Capitol Hill have made NIE realize that it may have more friends in the Administration than in Congress, for both the Senate and House Appropriations committees have voted for large recissions in the Institute's 1981 budget. The Senate Committee would cut the NIE appropriation by $10 million in the current fiscal year, while the House committee wants to take off $7 million.

The Administration, on the other hand, wants NIE to keep $74 million this year. Education Secretary Terrel Bell is known to believe that, with the fiscal year more than half over, a significant recission would play havoc with the Institute—the main federal agency supporting educational R&D.

But, on Capitol Hill, services to schoolchildren are a far more popular—and more lobbied for—cause than educational research. So, when the education appropriations subcommittees had to make room in the 1981 budget for a supplemental appropriation to keep student financial aid afloat, they were prepared to sacrifice NIE so as not to have to make such a big cut in programs like education for the handicapped.

The Program for Economic Recovery, in which the President announced his first round of spending cuts in February, speaks dismissively of NIE: "The research and dissemination activities of NIE, while occasionally making valuable contributions to the theory and practice of education, are of relatively low priority given present budgetary conditions."

But that was the voice of OMB. According to NIE staff, Secretary Bell and the other men chosen by Mr. Reagan to run the Education Department are much more appreciative of the Institute's work.

"It's our position that research in education will play an important role in this Administration," said acting NIE Director Milton Goldberg. "And NIE will continue to represent the primary federal involvement in educational R&D." (Goldberg took over from former NIE director Michael Timpane, a Carter appointee, who left in January. Last month Timpane was named Dean of Columbia University's Teachers College.)

According to Goldberg, the Administration's plan to consolidate federal support for elementary and secondary education into block grants will require a strong research base to help states and school districts decide how to allocate their new educational resources. —CC

Defense R&D Aide in New Post

George Gamota, who's been chief overseer of basic research support for the Defense Department for the past five years, is leaving that post to become Director of the Institute of Science and Technology at the University of Michigan.

Gamota, who holds a PhD in physics from Michigan, served DoD as Director, Research and Technical Information Office, through which he was the policy-level official for the individual services' basic research programs in universities, industry, and government laboratories. In recent years, DoD's basic research spending has risen rapidly, and is now at an annual total of about $750 million.

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